

"To promote Christian ideals for agriculture and rural life; to interpret the spiritual and religious values which inhere in the processes of agriculture and the relationships of rural life; to magnify and dignify the rural church; to provide a means of fellowship and cooperation among rural agencies: *Toward a Christian Rural Civilization.*"

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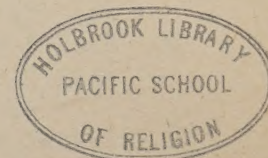
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IF I WERE A RURAL PASTOR

By Douglas Ensminger*



1. I would want to know and understand the basic social and economic trends of rural life:
 - a. Rural to urban.
 - b. Small informal group organization to village centered community and special interest groups.
 - c. Country church to town church.
 - d. One-room school to centralized school.
 - e. Small farm operated according to customs handed down to large-scale commercial farming utilizing findings of science.
 - f. Family and neighborhood recreation to commercial recreation.
 - g. General farming to specialized farming.
 - h. Little or no social stratification to much stratification.
 - i. Folk medicine to scientific medicine.
 - j. Limited Government control to much Government control.
 - k. Social contacts and interest limited to local area to world-wide contacts and interest.
2. I would want to know and understand the community of which the church is a part:
 - a. What are the boundaries of the community and the neighborhoods within the community?
 - b. What are the significant trends in the community?
 - (1) Neighborhood centered to village centered.
 - (2) Farm-village relationships.
 - (3) Village center increasing or decreasing in importance as social and economic center.
 - (4) Population--stable, increasing, or decreasing.
 - (5) Increase or decrease in degree of community consciousness.
 - c. Who are the people?
 - (1) How many?
 - (2) Stability.
 - (3) Cultural background.
 - (4) Dominant attitudes.
 - (5) Etc.

*Dr. Ensminger is in charge of Rural Sociology Extension Work, Federal Extension Service, and Social Scientist, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. This paper was used as the basis of discussions led by Dr. Ensminger at the Emory University School for Town and Country Ministers, Atlanta, Georgia, June 28, 1945. Reprinted with the kind permission of Dr. Ensminger.

- d. Ways of making a living:
 - (1) Agricultural products produced.
 - (2) Machinery and tools of production.
 - (3) Nonmaterial techniques of production.
 - (4) Man-land relations.
 - (5) Cycles of activity:
 - (a) Work of men.
 - (b) Work of women.
 - (6) Levels and standards of living.
 - e. Social organization and stratification:
 - (1) List all organizations and find out function and type of activities sponsored.
 - f. Social values:
 - (1) Land.
 - (2) What makes a man a good farmer?
 - (3) Tools and machinery necessary to farm.
 - (4) Security.
 - (5) Worth of man.
 - (6) Family life--is it a basic work unit?
 - (7) Education.
 - (8) Religion.
 - (9) Neighborliness.
 - (10) Others.
 - g. Contacts and relationship of community with outside world.
3. I would want to know what the basic problems or needs of the community are -- Man-land relationships, Adjustment in farming economy, Marketing, Health, School, Religion, Roads, Others:
- a. From the point of view of the people themselves.
 - b. From the point of view of outside leaders.
4. I would want to know what agencies and organizations there are in the county working with rural people, and what they are doing or might do to help solve problems in the community:
- a. Social welfare and health.
 - b. Nutrition council.
 - c. Ministerial association.
 - d. Farm organizations.
 - e. Superintendent of schools.
 - f. 4-H and homemakers clubs.
 - g. Agricultural agencies:
 - (1) Agricultural Adjustment Agency.
 - (2) Farm Security Administration.
 - (3) Rural Electrification Administration.
 - (4) Soil Conservation Service.
 - (5) Commodity Credit Corporation.
 - (6) Extension.
 - (7) Others.
 - h. Highway department.
 - i. Others.

5. I would want to know the recent history of the church in the community:

- a. Trend in membership and attendance.
- b. Tenure of pastoral service.
- c. Position of community leadership assumed by pastors and church.
- d. In what type of community activities has church cooperated during recent years -
 - (1) With schools?
 - (2) With other churches?
 - (3) With organizations of community?
 - (4) With county agencies or organizations?
- e. Has the church ever expressed itself on community issues?
 - (1) Sunday movies.
 - (2) Card playing.
 - (3) Dancing and recreation.

Has church been weakened or strengthened as a community force as result of these stands?

6. I would want to know to whom the people look for leadership in a wide range of interest and activities such as -

- a. Homemaking.
- b. Farming.
- c. Education.
- d. Recreation.
- e. Religion.
- f. Youth activities.
- g. Family relationships.
- h. Politics.

Where do these leaders fit into the social structure of the community?
How does one become a recognized leader?

7. I would want to know how the community makes up its mind on basic issues and expresses itself?

8. I would want to know where to start, and how far one could expect the community to go in organizing for action--action to solve community problems.

9. I would determine my role in helping to improve rural life in the community -

- a. Working as a stimulator.
- b. Working as a forceful community leader.

10. I would stimulate discussion among the leaders on basic needs of the community, helping them to discover the community needs and see that most problems can be solved by the people themselves through united action.

11. I would help the leaders evolve ways and means of organizing for action in keeping with the needs of the community and its experience with organization.
